Call From

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Call From

by lurkinglurkerwholurks

Summary

Faintly, Bruce could make out the sound of someone crying.

“Hello?” he asked again, still half-stretched out of bed, one hand braced against the floor.

A wet, hiccuping noise, louder this time, closer to the phone. It still took Bruce a moment to recognize Tim’s voice. Gooseflesh rose up his arms. He had never heard Tim cry before.

——Can be read as a standalone——

Notes

Whumptober prompts 8 (everything hurts and I'm dying), 17 (breaking point), 22 (pick your poison), 27 (stumbling), alt3 (dazed and confused), alt12 (carried to safety), alt15 (tears)

See the end of the work for more notes

Bruce fumbled for his phone, only partially awake but more so by the moment. It was still dark in his room, the only light coming from the screen.

Dick, his heart stuttered. Tragedy out in Bludhaven. Or the League, some threat that couldn't wait until morning.

Bruce's grasping hand missed, knocked the phone to the rug where it landed face up with a muffled clatter. He noticed the time first, a mere hour after he had gone to bed. He noticed the caller second, the name in white across his default ocean coast background: T.

Tim?

Tim was supposed to be home, asleep—Bruce squinted one-eyed again at the time even as he snatched up the phone—yes, definitely home *asleep*. Jack had come home yesterday, so Robin was off-call for the weekend.

Bruce tapped open the call and lifted the phone to his ear. "Hello?"

Silence.

No, not silence. Faintly, Bruce could make out the sound of someone crying.

"Hello?" he asked again, still half-stretched out of bed, one hand braced against the floor.

A wet, hiccuping noise, louder this time, closer to the phone. It still took Bruce a moment to recognize Tim's voice. Gooseflesh rose up his arms. He had never heard Tim cry before.

"Tim?" Bruce pushed himself fully upright but sat frozen in bed.

He saw death. He saw blood. He saw Joker with a knife to Tim's throat, Riddler with a bomb duct-tapped to Tim's chest. He saw more heartbreak than he could survive.

"Bruce?" It was definitely Tim, even with his voice warped by tears.

Bruce, not Batman, some detached corner of Bruce's brain noticed. This was Tim talking, not Robin. Tim, calling Bruce, in tears.

At least he's still breathing.

“What’s wrong?” It was a fight not to dip into Batman’s register, low and with bands of steel to bind back his emotions.

Bruce was on his feet now, reaching for clothes, for shoes, phone pinched between his cheek and shoulder.

“Uh’need he-elp.” Tim wasn’t just crying. He was sobbing. Sobbing so quietly that Bruce hadn’t noticed until he spoke, words slurred and hiccuping with each breath.

“Where are you?” It could be anything. An accident at home, a tragedy in the city. What if Tim had gone patrolling on his own? What if he and Jack had been out somewhere? He needed more information, but Tim was crying too hard.

Bruce put the phone on speaker so he could pull on sweatpants and scoop the fob from the end table into his other hand. Tim’s wheezing echoed tinnily, and Bruce found his own chest catching.

He stopped, hand splayed against the dresser, knuckles white, and forced himself to take a breath before picking up the phone. “Tim, listen to me. I need you to breathe with me, can you do that?”

Tim mumbled something indistinct. It could have been an agreement or not meant for Bruce at all. Was he drugged? Fear-gassed? In some kind of medical crisis?

“Tim.” Bruce let a little of Batman’s command thread into his voice. “Take a deep breath right now. With me, ready?”

In.

Out.

He could hear the exhalation from Tim, sooner than Bruce’s own, and still too shaky and shallow, but he was doing it.

“Good. Again.” Bruce breathed again as he yanked open his bedroom door and sprinted for the stairs. “Again.”

Bruce took the stairs three at a time, thundering down in a way he hadn’t since his youth. He needed to get to the Cave. There was no time to wake Alfred, and Bruce worried that shouting for him would distract Tim. They repeated the process as Bruce tore through the back hallways. Tim was still crying, but he wasn’t gasping for air any longer. That was good.

Or is it because he's dying? He's not breathing at all, that's why you can't hear it.

No. No, Bruce could hear breathing, voiced exhalations like teary moans.

"You're doing great," Bruce lied. "I need to know what's going on. Are you hurt?"

"Hurt," Tim echoed in little more than a croak. "Hurt."

"Okay. Okay, tell me what hurts."

"Heeeeeaaaaad," Tim groaned. "M'st'm'ch." As if to underline his point, the sound of retching echoed over the line. Poison?

There was a garbled noise like a stumble or a fall, and a cry from Tim.

"Tim?"

No answer. The silence made Bruce's skin crawl.

"Tim, talk to me," Bruce ordered. "What happened? Are you bleeding?"

"Bleeding?" Tim's voice was high with panic, nearly a squeak. "'m I bleeding??"

Okay, bad question, though not having the answer made Bruce want to curl up and have a little panic attack of his own. He was in the Cave now, sprinting full-tilt to the computer, praying to anyone who would listen that Tim had the GPS on his phone turned on.

"Where are you?" he tried again.

"Dunno. Don't *know*," Tim wailed, and he sounded more like a lost little boy than Bruce had ever heard him be before.

Please, he's just a kid. He's not even mine, but he's just a boy.

"Okay, sweetheart, okay, just breathe," Bruce soothed. "I'll find you. Stay right where you are and I'll find you."

There was the sound of retching again and quiet weeping. Bruce could have drowned in it, but he tried to listen beyond to background noises, any clue to where Tim was being held.

“What do you see?”

The BatComputer was waking up. He just needed a minute more.

“Dark.” Tim’s voice was muffled. “Trees.”

Trees?

“Tim, are you outside?” Trees in Gotham? A park? Or was he not in Gotham at all?

“Nn-hnn.”

Outside with trees, but dark. It was a waxing moon that night, not full but nearly so, and even at this hour, there still should be some light to see by.

“Can you see the moon?”

“No-o. Just trees. Hurt, hurt my leg, I—” Tim coughed, then groaned.

Woods? Bruce knew every block of Gotham, every patch of scraggly brown grass and crooked branch, but his mind was blank with panic. All he could picture was cracked asphalt and crumbling brick. Nowhere with enough trees to block out the moon.

“What’s wrong with your leg?” he asked, desperate to keep a coherent line of dialogue flowing and to have some picture of what was happening.

“Fell off,” Tim said, blunt in a way that made Bruce’s brain stutter. “Can’t—m’*stuck*. Bruce, m’stuck, help me. *Help me.*”

Tim had his GPS on. Bruce stared at the screen, disbelieving, but only for a moment. In the next heartbeat, he was gone, sprinting back upstairs.

“I’m coming,” he promised, putting every drop of conviction into his voice, as if he could reach through the phone and clasp Tim’s hand through force of will alone. “I’m coming, Tim, just keep talking to me.”

Nothing made sense. Not the blinking red light on the map Bruce had thrown to his phone. Not the mumbled, weeping replies from Tim. Not the way Bruce felt like he couldn’t breathe, broken from the inside out at the thought of anything happening to this child.

It took too long to reach the thick patch of trees that delineated the property line between the Waynes and the Drakes. Bruce had Tim on speaker again, looking from the screen to the dark and silent wood in front of him. He didn't pause at the edge, instead plunging in even as he flicked on the flashlight function. He wanted searchlights, floodlights, but had to content himself with sweeping the narrow beam in enough of an arc to see by.

"Tim!" Bruce bellowed into the open air. "Tim, can you hear me? Timothy!"

The return cry was more echo than noise, but Bruce heard it. He crashed through the bushes, leaping over scrub and fallen branches, until he reached the ditch where a black-haired boy lay sprawled half in, half out, limbs tangled among the thick shrubs.

"Tim." Bruce knelt and lifted his phone to get a better view.

"Bru-usssse." Tim's face was smeared with tears, snot, and dirt, a red scratch across his cheek, likely from stumbling through the woods. He tried to reach for Bruce, but the sleeve of his t-shirt had snagged on the bush he had fallen through.

"Hold still," Bruce ordered, checking quickly for broken bones, impalement, or any other danger that would prevent Tim from moving.

When he found nothing, he looked back to the still-weeping boy in the ditch. With Bruce in sight, Tim had stifled his own hiccuping sobs and subsided back into near-silent tears. He looked miserable, which Bruce tried to keep in mind as his cresting panic warred against the reek of alcohol that wafted off Tim like smog.

"Timothy," Bruce began, relief and crashing adrenaline quickly shifting into growing anger, but Tim had flinched back from the light and was cringing with his face buried in his own shoulder. He looked pathetic. Pathetic and so very young.

"Hurts," Tim croaked again. Bruce sighed, relented.

"Okay, he murmured. "Okay, hold still, I'll get you out."

Bruce began the painstaking process of disentangling boy from debris. Tim's stumbling path through the woods was clear enough, even by flashlight. Just out of sight would be piles of vomit where alcohol and fear had forced their way up. Bruce could see where Tim had tripped

and fallen into the ditch. A better examination later would likely show a twisted ankle.

Tim was still crying as Bruce lifted him out of the ditch and into his arms.

He should cry, Bruce thought bitterly, then regretted the bitterness and the approval alike. He never wanted to hear a child cry, no matter the reason. Especially not this child.

“Okay,” Bruce mumbled and shifted Tim to hold the boy a little closer. “Okay. It’s alright.”

The journey was a slow one, hindered by the lack of light on the return and Bruce’s need to be careful with his back. It was silent except for the crunch of Bruce’s carefully placed steps in the dirt and the distant chirping of crickets. Tim’s tears soaked Bruce’s shirt but didn’t make a sound. Bruce was careful to think only about what would happen next and not about what could have been, nor about the disorienting muscle memory of cradling a half-grown boy he had never held before.

Alfred was waiting at the side door when they arrived. They exchanged looks over Tim’s head—Alfred’s concerned, Bruce’s dour and bewildered all at once. As they passed by, Alfred caught whiff of Tim and his expression changed. Bruce’s stayed the same.

He didn’t understand. This was Tim. Quiet, responsible, meticulous Tim. Tim, who bullied Bruce into going to bed and eating dinners outside of the Cave. Tim who had never once shown any signs of addiction or even interest—who had, in fact, ratted *Bruce* out a time or two to Alfred or Dick.

Tim, who didn’t ask for help.

Tim, who didn’t cry.

Bruce carried Tim into the kitchen and poured the boy into a chair. In the light, Tim managed to look even worse than he had outside. Though less hauntingly pale, he was still several shades below his normal color, a difference only heightened by the high pink in his cheeks and nose. Bruce kept him braced upright with one hand as the other pulled a second chair close. As he sat, Alfred placed a damp washcloth on the table with a cup of water and then disappeared after a nod of thanks from Bruce.

“Tim,” Bruce began, then stopped, not sure how to proceed.

Dick had gotten drunk once that Bruce knew of. He had been given a bottle of wine by a grateful citizen who had ignored the *teen* in *Teen Titans*, and he and Wally had made short work of it. As far as Bruce knew, Wally had been fine, but Dick had staggered home, peed in a vase, and then woken the next morning with a hangover powerful enough to make Bruce almost pity him. Almost.

Bruce had been at a loss then, too, not sure how to navigate the already unsteady ground of brother-father figure that was further in flux as Dick became more independent. The illegality of underage drinking he could deal with, though he knew it was hypocritical of him. The rest… He had fumbled through it, as he often did, with one eye to Alfred’s example. Their relationship had survived, and as far as Bruce knew, Dick had waited until 21 to drink again.

But Tim… This was different. *Tim* was different, but so was Bruce’s role in his life. Right?

Anger, a white-hot flareup from a fire never fully extinguished, roared in Bruce’s chest before being banked again. Where was Jack Drake? Why didn’t he care that his son was wandering through the woods, drunk, upset, and alone? Or maybe Jack was also drunk, passed out safely in the shelter of his own home.

Bruce couldn’t think about that right now without wanting to break something, and Tim already looked like he was on the far side of fragile. Instead, Bruce pressed the water into Tim’s hand and forced him to drink as he did another inspection under the sconced kitchen lights. Only when Bruce was sure that there was no damage other than some scrapes, bruises, and a mildly twisted ankle did he let himself breathe more fully.

Tim had stopped crying for the moment, his attention and concentration fixated on lifting the cup of water to his lips. Bruce took advantage of the moment to pick up the washcloth and begin to wipe away the dirt, snot, and tears that caked Tim’s face.

“Tim,” he began again, and swallowed a grunt as Tim’s head jerked toward his voice. “Do you know where you are?”

Tim blinked, then looked around slowly as if realizing he was somewhere new for the first time. “Inside.”

Bruce made sure his sigh wasn’t vocalized. “Yes. Do you know inside

where?"

Tim hummed. "Th' Manor." As soon as he said it, his already slouched body relaxed further, as if some tensely strung cord inside of him had been released.

"That's right," Bruce agreed. "You're in Wayne Manor with me and Alfred."

He dragged the washcloth across Tim's cheek and was both bemused and amused when Tim physically leaned into the sensation. Bruce was struck again by how very young this Robin was. He wanted to strangle Jack Drake. The man was only in town for the weekend after three weeks abroad. The least he could do was be aware that his underage son was drunk in the woods in the dead of night.

Bruce cleared his throat and made sure his tone was neutral before asking, "Tim, where's Jack?"

Tim burst into tears. Bruce froze, washcloth still lifted. He stayed completely still as Tim—sobbing, nearly incoherent, and still very drunk—confessed that Jack Drake had not come home after all. Instead of arriving the night before, he had texted, saying he would see Tim next week instead. Tim, hurt, angry, and bewildered, had helped himself to Jack's fully stocked bar. Because it was there, and Jack was not.

"Why didn't you just come here?"

Alfred would have been thrilled to have company, and Bruce had thought Tim knew by now that he was welcome any time. But Tim shook his head and tearily refused to answer, and Bruce understood. No child should have to protect their parents the way Tim did.

Bruce relented. "Okay," he murmured as he wiped the fresh tears from Tim's face. "Okay. We'll talk about this in the morning."

"M'sorry," Tim mumbled. "M'sorry."

Bruce bent down, ducking his head until he could catch Tim's gaze. "Tim. I'm glad you knew it was safe to come here. Next time…" He hoped there was never a next time. "Call me. I'll come get you. And don't ever drink alone."

Tomorrow, they would address the legal concerns, the danger Tim had put himself in, the what-ifs, and the consequences. But not tonight.

If Tim were Dick or… If Tim were his child, Bruce would have kissed his forehead and pulled him into a hug. Tim was not. Instead, he squeezed Tim's narrow shoulder and then straightened with a pop of his spine.

He could hear Alfred setting up an IV pole in the living room. They would need to check Tim's BAC and monitor him for the night, so Bruce mentally bid farewell to his bed. Knowing Alfred, there was likely a toothbrush and spit bowl waiting as well, so no need to detour. Rather than lifting Tim back into his arms, he helped the boy to his feet and guided him into the waiting gloom.

"Baseball or talk shows?" he asked as they sat on the couch.

Tim wrinkled his nose. "Ugh."

Bruce grunted, as close as he would get to a laugh tonight. They would get Tim cleaned up and settled. Alfred would return to bed. Tim would get to doze lightly, letting rest burn away the alcohol and sharpen the edge of his first hangover. And Bruce would stay awake, blinking gritty eyes at a bright screen, another man's son heavy against his shoulder.

The phone vibrated by his elbow, the accompanying flash pulling Bruce's focus away from the paperwork spread across the desktop in front of him. It was still relatively early in the night, at least for his family, and as he pushed his glasses up onto his forehead and lifted the phone to see the caller, he mentally calculated the odds of whose name would appear.

TIMOTHY DRAKE WAYNE the screen read. Tim's face looked back at him, a nervous little half-smile captured at Bruce's request a few months after his adoption. He had looked so young even then, but younger now, several years onward.

It was Dick and Damian's week at the Manor, a routine that continued to chafe but also eased many of the tensions still bubbling after Bruce's presumed death and return. Tim would be at his own apartment, most likely, or maybe at one of Jason's safehouses. Bruce didn't know the full shape of their relationship and he was reluctant to take its measure without invitation. Whatever peace they had brokered in his absence, he was glad of it.

Bruce set down his pen and leaned back in his chair before answering. "Hello?"

He expected a question, perhaps a tricky case Tim was fiddling with in his spare time, or a random thought Tim would then use to segue into a casual chat to help fill the time until it was his week at the Manor. Bruce enjoyed both of these, when they happened. Tim was more inclined to text, but Bruce liked to hear his voice.

Instead, there was no greeting, just the sound of breathing.

Bruce sat up a little straighter. “Tim?”

“Broke my promise.” That was Tim’s voice, but not the Tim Bruce knew. This Tim was flat, as dead-toned as a hostage reading from a script.

Bruce had to remind himself to keep breathing. “What promise did you break?” he asked, careful to keep his tone light and open.

Tim hadn’t made many promises to Bruce. He had a way of going quiet when pressed, implying agreement without actually agreeing, then slipping off to do whatever he had planned in the first place, conscience clear and mind set. The few Bruce could recollect pinning him down on all had to do with his own well-being.

There was a noise like the gurgle of water and a clink.

“Tim?” Bruce asked again. “Everything alright?”

He braced, waiting for the family code, the signal that Tim wasn’t alone, that he was under duress, that he needed Batman to crash through his window.

Instead, Tim asked, “Can you come?”

Bruce was already pushing away from his desk. “Yes. Where am I going?”

“My place.” Another sloshing sound, which Bruce finally recognized as a glass bottle being tipped up.

“I’m coming,” Bruce promised. “Stay on the phone with me.”

Tim left the phone on but didn’t speak again. Any attempt at conversation was met with a grunt or silence. Bruce drove with an iron grip on the steering wheel, keeping track of each audible sip.

He knew Tim’s address but had never been before. He had asked, more than once, and Tim had demurred, citing conflicting schedules,

messy bedrooms, or later times that would be better. And it was true, the current shape of their lives meant it was difficult to make schedules align. If it was Tim's week at the Manor, he didn't want to be at his apartment, and if it wasn't, then Bruce was expected to spend his time with Dick and Damian. Bruce had always expected to find a way, someday, or just wait out the clock until Tim was able to move back permanently. This was not how he expected to visit.

Bruce took the stairs, phone off speaker and held to his ear now as he hiked up narrow stairs to Tim's apartment. He had a key. Tim's emancipation was still a touchy subject, but after his collapse earlier that year, Bruce had required a backup set. So Bruce didn't have to wait to be let in, but instead gave a perfunctory knock and then stepped inside.

Tim was not in the living room. At least, Bruce thought this was the living room. The front door opened onto a small room, carpeted, with a couch, beanbag chair, and end table. A small television sat on the floor against one wall, a gaming console with two controllers in a pile next to it. The walls were white. The carpet was vaguely beige. A Mario poster taped to one wall was the only thing with color. It was all so un-Tim that Bruce could only stare.

The kitchenette was a narrow strip of linoleum and one half-wall of cabinets with a small square of laminate countertop. There, at least, was some sign of life—a sink full of dishes, a roll of paper towels without a holder, a wilting geranium in a plastic pot. But still no Tim.

"Tim?" Bruce called.

He heard his own voice echo from a hall just off the living room. Cautiously, Bruce followed it down, until he was standing in the doorway of the bedroom. The room had no overhead light, just a small bedside lamp. Tim was caught in the edge of its glow, profile limned in gold as he sat slumped on the bed, back against the wall, a bottle resting against his leg.

The lighting obscured most details. Bruce tried to look for injuries but saw none. Then again, his children were far, far too good at hiding all but the worst. He was afraid, studying Tim's profile in silhouette, that this was one of those times.

"Tim?" Bruce said again, low and gentle.

Tim twitched, not quite turning to look at Bruce, but jerking his chin enough to acknowledge the sound. "Hey. I…" He licked his lips,

pausing to chew on the top one a moment. “Sorry. Broke m’promise.”

“Promise?” Bruce echoed, aware of the reverberating deja vu from earlier. “What promise is that?”

Tim made to lift the bottle, but only managed to waggle it a few inches off the bed before letting it fall again. There was a good portion gone. “Not t’drink alone. Sorry.”

Bruce hadn’t thought about that horrible night in ages. There had been other horrible nights since—with Tim, with Dick or Jason or Cass or Damian, or with Bruce himself—and new traumas took precedence over old. And Tim, as far as Bruce knew, had stayed away from alcohol since, the combination of his resulting hangover and Bruce and Alfred’s joint disappointment a powerful enough deterrent.

But Bruce had been gone a long time, and there was no accounting for what else he might have missed.

Bruce edged into the room, careful to keep his posture loose and nonthreatening. All of his children were sensitive to his disapproval, his perceived anger, and Tim was no exception.

“Where’d you get that?” he asked, not sure where to start but knowing he must. A full bottle of alcohol supplied to his still very underage son was at least *a* place to begin, if not the best.

“Don’ worry ‘bout it,” was Tim’s slurred reply. As Bruce watched, he brought the bottle to his lips and took another drink, grimacing at the bite. He looked no less miserable as he lowered the bottle to the mattress again.

“Jack,” Tim began, and Bruce went still. Tim rarely brought up either of his parents freely. “Jack always said a good negroni was the mark of a ‘proper Drake man.’”

Tim’s voice deepened in mocking approximation of his dead father. He snorted, rolling his eyes at his own air quotes. “Only, only he never taught me.” Tim sniffed and wiped his nose on the back of his wrist. “Thought I c’ld figure it out. YouTube.”

He shook his head. “Nope. So I…” He lifted the bottle again, wordlessly displaying the result of his failure.

Bruce didn’t know what to say. He never did, when it came to Jack. The man was dead. There was no healing to come from excoriating

him, no matter how badly Bruce wished he could. Nor did the story explain why Bruce's straightlaced son felt the need to get drunk in the first place.

"Rough day?" Bruce asked.

Tim shrugged, shoulders rising and falling the way a marionette's might, all string and no muscle. Even as he brushed away the question, his expression rippled, collapsing into something nearing tears before righting itself again. He closed his eyes and let his head rest back against the wall.

It had taken Bruce too long to notice how skilled Tim was at hiding his own hurts. At how quick he was to bury the first sign of *need* or *want*. And too often Bruce had let him. They were both trying to be better now, but some patterns were hard to break. But Bruce knew, for Tim's sake, he had to be better. And it turned out he knew where to start after all.

Instead of waiting for an invitation, Bruce took the two steps needed to reach the bed and sat next to his son.

"C'mere," he murmured and caught Tim as he collapsed into his side.

It was a unique kind of pain, listening to his children cry. If Bruce could snap his fingers and change the world for them, he would. But there was nothing to fix here, not really. All he could do was listen and wait.

Bruce pressed his lips to Tim's scalp and held him close as Tim sobbed, then decided that an arm around him wasn't close enough and pulled Tim onto his lap instead. Tim, small though he was, was too big. Bruce didn't care. He had allowed Tim his space early on, assuming that Tim didn't want or need physical affection, that he was too independent, that he didn't look to Bruce for that sort of thing. It had taken dying to find out he was wrong.

Tim clung to him, face pressed into his shirt, body shaking with sobs.

"Talk to me," Bruce encouraged gently, one hand rubbing circles between his son's shoulder blades.

"Hurts," Tim gasped. "*Hurts.*"

"What does?"

“Ev’rything.” Tim pressed a hand to his own chest, over his heart, and *pushed* as if he could rub the pain out of himself.

Bruce caught that hand and brought the knuckles to his lips. “I’m sorry, love. I wish… I could fix it for you.” He would have moved earth itself, crossed universes, thrown himself back into the clutches of time, if it meant his children never needing to cry again.

Tim made a noise somewhere between a groan and a sigh, and Bruce rested his cheek atop Tim’s head. There would be time later to find out what, if anything had happened. It could have been an event, a memory, a trigger. Or it could have been nothing at all. They all bore their own scars, and some ran deep enough to be lifelong. They could talk about medication, about a change to Tim’s therapy, about consequences for underage drinking. But all of that could wait for the new day.

Bruce rocked his son until the shaking sobs subsided into sniffles. The combination of booze and tears had left Tim boneless and nauseated, so Bruce lifted his boy as if he were fourteen again and carried him into the living room.

There was no Alfred this time, so Bruce had to fetch the water and the washcloth himself, but the rest was an echo, reverberating and distorting. The face he cleaned now was leaner, older, its nose crookedly reset after a break, but it was his boy’s face. Bruce was getting better at leaning into impulse, so he did now, pressing his lips to the spot on Tim’s cheek that the cloth had just cleaned.

Tim gave a wet little snort. It was a nicer sound than tears.

“I’m glad you called,” Bruce murmured. “Thank you.”

Tim hummed, and Bruce pressed the glass of water into his hands as they settled back on the couch.

“Baseball or talk shows?” Bruce asked as he reached for the remote.

“Only got subscriptions,” Tim said, this side shy of smug, though his voice still wobbled. “Cartoons or cooking shows.” He gave a little *urp*, then amended, “Cartoons.”

Bruce chuckled and reached for his phone.

At Tim’s, he pecked out with one thumb. *Done for night.*

A pause, and then a thumbs up on the other end.

Bruce turned off his phone.

End Notes

Shout-out to the IronDad fandom for pretending like it's still 2016 and rolling out "sad drunk child gives parental figure heart attack" fics on the regular.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!